

HOME BALLADS
AND
METRICAL VERSIONS

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Jos. Henry Dubbo.

HOME BALLADS

AND

METRICAL VERSIONS.

BY

✓
JOSEPH HENRY DUBBS, D. D.

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PHILADELPHIA:

CHARLES G. FISHER, 907 ARCH ST.

1888.

PS 1555
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INQUIRER PRINTING COMPANY,
LANCASTER, PA.

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PREFACE.

THE following verses were composed at long intervals, and are of unequal merit. A few of them appeared several years ago in "The Independent," "The Messenger" and other periodicals; but the greater number were written for "The Guardian," a religious magazine which was for some time edited by the author. In composing the historical pieces the writer was conscious of a desire to honor the memory of several of our almost forgotten pioneers, and at the same time to indicate a way by which our rich stores of legend and folk-lore might be employed for literary purposes. Though these ballads are chiefly of local interest, there are friends who will be pleased to see them in this collected form.

The metrical versions were originally intended to form part of a series in illustration of the minor German poets of the present century. It will, therefore, be observed that the examples have not generally been selected from the great classic poets, of whose best works there are many versions, but rather from writers whose poems, though less famous, are to the Christian reader, at least, hardly less charming. Though it has been the purpose of

the translator to reproduce the full meaning of the original, he has been even more desirous of retaining its peculiar life and spirit. If it should be said that he has rambled along only a few of the by-ways of German literature, he will be cheered by the reflection that he may have occasionally discovered a flower which had escaped the attention of the ordinary traveler.

HOME BALLADS.

CONRAD BUCHER.

Rev. John Conrad Bucher, a minister of the Reformed Church, was born in the canton of Schaffhausen, Switzerland, June 10th, 1730; died at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, August 15th, 1780. He studied for the ministry at St. Gall, Basel, Marburg and Göttingen; but, about 1756, came to America and entered the British military service. His promotion was rapid, but in 1763 he resigned his commission and became a minister of the Gospel. In the following lines we have attempted to versify some of the events in the career of this excellent man.

We have read full oft of the heroes grand
Who live in the annals of Switzerland;
Of the courage high and the warlike deed
Of Tell, and Melchthal, and Winkelried;

But in rhyme the story has ne'er been told
Of the little band of Switzers bold,
Who across the sea, to its western shore,
The precious faith of their fathers bore.

Names uncouth in the English tongue—
Goetschius,¹ Schlatter²—remain unsung;
But as brave were they as the men who fell
On the fields of Uri or Appenzell.

Have you read the story of one who came
Across the ocean in quest of fame,
From the place where over the rocky wall,
At grand Schaffhausen, the waters fall?

Have you heard how he wielded his valiant sword,
But laid it aside to serve the Lord?
It was Conrad Bucher. Let me tell
How he served the king and his Maker well.

In the quiet cloisters of old St. Gall,
He had heard in his youth the Master's call;
He had sat at the feet of godly men,
In the schools of Basel and Göttingen;

¹ John Henry Goetschius, of Zürich, Switzerland, came to America before 1730. He was an eminent minister and the founder of many churches in eastern Pennsylvania.

² Michael Schlatter, a native of St. Gall, was a celebrated missionary, and the founder of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States.

But, 'twas said, in the land of the setting sun
There were battles fought and honors won;
And there came a message across the main,
That Braddock was beaten at Fort Duquesne.

Could he hear the sound of the rolling drum,
That to distant battles bade him come ?
Did he heed the music far away,
When he followed the fortunes of bold Bouquet ?¹

Have you read of the German regiment,
That was furthest into the forest sent ?
How in summer's heat and winter's snows
They freed the land from its dusky foes ?

There, bright in the forest's darkest shade,
Was the flash of Bucher's battle-blade ;
And the painted chiefs, the legends tell,
Knew the hand that smote them when they fell.

It was when they lingered, to rest awhile,
In the famous barracks of fair Carlisle,
That the soldiers prayed him to preach the Word,
So precious of old time, so long unheard ;

¹ Henry Bouquet, a Swiss officer of merit, came to America in 1756. He entered the British service, and led a successful expedition against the Indians.

For, there comes a time in the soldier's strife,
When he hungers anew for the Bread of Life;
And he longs, like the scion of Jesse's stem,
To drink of the waters of Bethlehem.

Once more the Master's call had come,
And louder it sounded than fife or drum :
" Renounce thy laurels and sheathe the sword !
Take up thy burden and serve the Lord ! "

Ah ! where was the soldier's dream of fame ?
To his Saviour's altar he humbly came,
And the " Fathers " ordained the captain there,
With benediction and heartfelt prayer.

To his faithful soldiers, at fair Carlisle,
As a Royal Chaplain he preached awhile ;
But then, until life's work was done,
He served his Master in Lebanon.

And wherever our ancient churches stand,
From bright Swatara to Maryland,
The hearts of the people were deeply stirred
When his voice like a trumpet-blast was heard.

All hail to Bucher ! For him, we know,
No drums are beaten, no bugles blow.
But 'tis well—for he cast his laurels down,
And took up the cross to win the crown.

THE GRAVE OF HENRY ANTES.

Henry Antes, "the pious Reformed layman of Frederick township," died, July 20, 1755, and was buried in a private burial-place on his farm, about half way between Keeler's and Falkner Swamp Churches, in Montgomery county, Pennsylvania, where his grave is marked by a tombstone with an appropriate inscription.

A little spot on the hill-side
Is all that is now his own,
A little mound in a thicket,
And a worn sepulchral stone;
For a century has departed
Since they gently laid him down
In the grave he himself had chosen,
On his farm in Fredericktown.

His land is held by a stranger,
And so is the ancient mill,
But the name of HENRY ANTES
May be read on the tombstone still;
And 'tis writ in the Lamb's blest volume—
As the angels know full well—
For he sought a home in the regions
Where the saints and angels dwell.

He loved the Church of his fathers,
And over the stormy sea
He had borne, as a precious treasure,
Their faith to the land of the free;
But the flock was without a shepherd,
And many had gone to sleep,
So he lifted his voice like a trumpet
To gather the scattered sheep.

He greeted the mild Moravians
As the servants of the Lord;¹
And with Zinzendorf and Boehler
He labored in sweet accord;
For they sought to unite the churches
In a brotherhood of love,
By a "union in the Spirit,"
Like that of the Church above.

¹ In connection with the Moravians, Antes labored to establish "the Congregation of God in the Spirit." "This new communion proposed not to interfere with the confessional position of its members, but according to the Zinzendorffian theory of Tropes, it was willing that the Reformed should remain Reformed, the Lutherans should remain Lutherans, and so of the rest, having their separate consistories or ecclesiastical assemblies, with their pastors and congregations, only in subordination to this more catholic body, founded on certain essentials, and these consisting more in spirit than in doctrine."—*Harbaugh's "Fathers of the Reformed Church,"* vol. 1, p. 331.

He stood by the side of Whitefield,¹
And prayed in the German tongue,
When the clarion voice of the preacher
O'er the hills of Frederick rung.
They knew not each other's language,
Nor did they need it then ;
For the one cried, " Hallelujah ! "
And the other said, " Amen ! "

When his heart was almost broken,²
And he felt that his end was nigh,
To his farm in Frederick township
Henry Antes returned to die ;

¹ Rev. George Whitefield, the most celebrated pulpit orator of modern times, preached at the house of Henry Antes, April 23, 1740, to a great multitude of people. Mr. Seward, who accompanied Whitefield, says in his journal," pp. 12-13. " They were Germans where we dined and supped, and they prayed and sung in German, as we did in English, before and after eating." What a magnificent subject for a painter ! Whitefield preaching English to the Germans of Frederick township, who, while most of them probably failed to understand the sermon, could not help feeling the power of his transcendent eloquence.

² The union movement, though well meant, had not the elements of permanency. When it failed, Antes went with the Moravians and removed to Bethlehem, but finally returned to his farm, " where he ended his days in pious retirement." " Ten of our Bethlehem Brethren bore the corpse to the grave, in the burial-place on his own land in Fredericktown, where yet other bodies of our Brethren repose."—*Records of the Moravian Church at Bethlehem.*

And when his spirit departed
To dwell in the land of the blest,
Ten loving Bethlehem Brethren
Bore his corpse to its final rest.

I feel, as I stand by his tombstone,
That he did not live in vain ;
I am moved by his noble example
To labor with might and main ;
For, though our labors may vanish
Like clouds in the summer sky,
The souls that are true to their Saviour
Shall reign with the saints on high.



A LEGEND OF EPHRATA.

John Peter Miller was for many years Prior of the convent of the Seventh-day Baptists at Ephrata, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Though in some respects fanatical, his sincere piety has never been questioned. The following legend was actually related to the author on a visit to Ephrata, and has since appeared in print. It is stated in the *Colonial Records* that the property of Michael Widman was confiscated by the government and sold in March, 1780.

This is the story I heard one day
In the ancient cloister at Ephrata :

Miller was Prior here, you know,
More than a hundred years ago.
Here at his summons, at dawn's early light,
Gathered the Brethren in garments of white,
Singing their songs of devotion and praise,
Raising to heaven their rapturous lays,
Ere to their labor, through cold and heat,
Forth they wandered with naked feet.

Treasure of treasures, Peace of Mind !
Where can the weary spirit find,
After temptation, heavenly rest ?
Where can the mourning soul be blest ?
Even within the convent's walls,
Often a cloud of sorrow falls ;

And the saint that is pure as the driven snow
Can never escape from his ruthless foe,
But must feel the blows of the monster grim
That is sent by Satan to buffet him.

Near the convent a tavern stood,
Kept by a Tory, a man of blood,
Michael Widman, whose dreaded name
Was known and hated for deeds of shame.
Often he stood at the convent gate,
Taunting the Brothers with words of hate.
Once he smote the Prior meek
Cruel blows on his aged cheek,
Adding the final deed of shame—
The cruel insult I need not name—
Which the soldiers wrought when they bent the knee
On the fearful journey to Calvary.

Washington was at Valley Forge,
Watching the army of old King George,
But he sent one day a soldier-band
To sieze the Tory that cursed the land;
And Widman was borne away to die
The shameful death of a British spy.

Some of the Brothers were glad to know
The coming fate of their wicked foe;

But the Prior said : " I cannot stay ! "
And over the hills he took his way.
His limbs were weary, his feet were sore,
When he stood at last at the chieftain's door,
And prayed aloud : " O, General, save
The man, who has sinned, from a traitor's grave ! "

" Pray," said the chieftain, " Tell me why
You plead for the life of a British spy ?
Does your love to your country's foes extend ?
And why have you chosen this wicked friend ? "

" Friend ? " cried the Prior, " It is not so ;
The man, I believe, is my only foe ;
But I seek to do what the Scriptures tell,
And those that hate me I love full well.
Save him ! save him ! I humbly pray,
As you hope to stand on the Judgment Day ! "

The chieftain mused : " Such love is rare,
And I cannot deny your earnest prayer.
I will spare the life of the British spy ;
He must leave the country, but shall not die.
You have taught a lesson that all should know,
That a Christian prays for his vilest foe."

Thus a way was found—and the way was best—
That led the Brothers to peace and rest ;

For the cruel Tories were seen no more,
Gathered around the tavern door;
And their wicked leader away was sent
To the foe, in lifelong banishment.

But the Brothers sang with the rising sun,
And patiently toiled till the day was done,
Till the Lord at last gave their souls release,
And took them home to the realms of peace.



THE TORY PREACHER.

The Reverend John Ludwig Voigt was, from 1765 to 1776, pastor of several churches in Montgomery and Chester counties, Pennsylvania. At the time when the following verses were written, the author was not aware that, after the occurrence which is here related, he removed no further than from Montgomery to Chester county, where he continued to minister to a part of his former charge. Even in his new residence he was made to suffer greatly for his political opinions, and in 1778 his two churches and the parsonage were occupied as military hospitals, on the grounds that "the pastor was a Tory, and did not pray publicly for Congress." (See "Hallesche Nachrichten," p. 1411.) His people, however, remained personally attached to him, and he continued to serve them faithfully for many years. He married late in life and left no descendants. The author's maternal grandmother was his niece.

"Grandpa! tell your boy a story—

You remember one, I know—

Of the times of war and glory,

And the battles long ago;

When, by fiercest foes surrounded,

Loud the bells of freedom rung;

When the trumpet's blast resounded,

In the days when you were young!"

"Ah! my boy!" the sire responded

To the urchin on his knee,

"Oft the bravest hearts desponded

When we struggled to be free.

Then the days were sad and dreary,
And the nights were full of woe,
When they tracked our footsteps weary
By the blood upon the snow.

“Home and freedom—rich possessions—
How we prized them, none can tell;
British red-coats—hireling Hessians—
Yes, methinks, we fought them well!
And ’tis writ in ancient stories,
That we kept the soldier’s vow;
But the Tories—ah! the Tories—
I could smite them even now.

“Well! ’tis wrong to hate forever,
And the Scripture says, you know,
We should use our best endeavor
To forgive the vilest foe.
No! I do not wish to wrong them,
And, perchance, there were a few
Poor, misguided men among them,
Who withal were good and true.

“There was one—a poor, old creature
Who had come from lands afar;
He had been a German preacher
In the days before the war.

Always, till his head was hoary,
Faithful to his Lord's command—
How he could become a Tory,
I could never understand.

“ Congress sent a Proclamation,
Bidding ministers to pray
For the army and the nation,
Fervently each Sabbath Day ;
But, unmindful of the warning,
Then he did a foolish thing,
And in church next Sunday morning
Prayed as usual for the king.

“ How the people then abused him !
Called him traitor to his face !
Ne'er before had men accused him
Of a deed of foul disgrace.
But he said : ‘ My brethren, hear me !
Soon, I know, my race is run ;
Death is surely drawing near me,
And the crown is almost won.

“ When in youth I crossed the ocean,
And had reached the western shore,
Filled with rapture and devotion,
Once a solemn oath I swore.

Will ye ask me now to break it?
Can I do this wicked thing?
Here's my life—'tis worthless—take it!
For I can't give up my king!"

"Then they closed his church—'twas madness
Thus to rouse the people's rage;
But he still, in grief and sadness,
Lingered in the parsonage;
And one night a band of 'Skinners'—
Thieves who roamed the land, they say,
Hardly caring who were winners—
Swore they'd make the parson pray.

"It was late—with door unfastened,
He was resting in his bed;
Thither then the villains hastened,
Held their pistols to his head,
And their chief, a stalwart ranger,
Cried, with murder in his eye,
'Parson, wake! your life's in danger!
Pray for Congress now, or die!

"Do not falter! Now or never!
Swear upon your bended knee,
To be firm and true forever
In the cause of liberty!"

‘Nay!’ he said. They shouted wildly,
‘Let the cursed Tory swing!’
But the parson whispered mildly,
‘Nay! I can’t give up my king!’

“‘Brand the traitor on his forehead!
Brand him with the letter T!’
So they cried, with gestures horrid,
Dancing in Satanic glee.
Ah! to wear the traitor’s token,
That would be a fearful thing!
But he still, in accents broken,
Said, ‘I can’t give up my king!’

“Then they beat him, unrelenting,
Till they thought him almost dead;
And, when they had ceased tormenting,
Left him bleeding on his bed.
And, although they could not read them,
All his books they burned or tore;
Well-worn clothes—they did not need them—
As their booty thence they bore.

“At the early dawn’s appearing,
Neighbors came with silent tread,
Through the narrow window peering,
Saw him seated on his bed.

Then they entered without knocking,
And they found him seated there;
In his hand a single stocking,
All that he had left to wear.

“Tears from many eyelids started
Forth, like fountains in the spring,
While they dressed the wounds that smarted;
Garments too they ran to bring;
In strange vesture they arrayed him,
Which forsooth became him ill,
Cursed the robber horde, and prayed him
To remain their pastor still.

“But he said: ‘My staff is yonder—
Let me take it in my hand!
Trusting in the Lord, I’ll wander;
Somewhere find a peaceful land.
Here I cannot be a teacher—
Ne’er the songs of Zion sing—
I am but a helpless creature,
But I can’t give up my king!’

“Then he gave them all his blessing—
There was none could bid him stay—
And, with grief beyond expressing,
Thence he took his weary way.

Where he went—that aged Tory—
Where he sleeps, I wish I knew.
This is all—a dreary story—
But, indeed, the story's true.

“ Well ! I cannot help regretting
Evil deeds, though done of yore ;
And I pray that, ne'er forgetting
Him who reigns for evermore,
When at last, life's sorrows leaving,
I my final tribute bring,
I may, faithful and believing,
Say, ‘ I can't give up my King ! ’ ”

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THE LEGEND OF TAMBOUR YOKEL.

The following legend is related—sometimes with fanciful exaggerations—concerning an ancient churchyard in Lehigh county, Pennsylvania. The story can be traced for more than a century. Whatever may have been its historic foundation, it is certain that, a few years ago, it was very generally credited. It was always told with due solemnity, as an example of the mysterious punishment of a dreadful crime.

Tell the story with bated breath—
A story of horror, and gloom, and death.

A little church on a lonely hill ;
A churchyard near it, calm and still ;

Fair in the morning's early light ;
Dark and gloomy it seems at night.

There it is said, in the olden time,
Happened a nameless deed of crime ;

And stalwart men, with swiftest pace,
Haste when they pass that dreadful place.

Home, with the troop, from the war had come
Tambour Yokel, who beat the drum :

A worthless wretch, who on his way
Had learned but the arts of a bird of prey ;

Who had sold, it was said, in the dreadful strife,
His soul to Satan to save his life.

“Now where,” he cried, “is my ancient foe?
I have come from the battle to lay him low.”

“Peace! Peace!” they answered. “Your boast is vain;
The man will never fight again;

The foe you hated, and sought to kill,
Now rests in the churchyard on the hill,”

“Ho! What of that?” the drummer cried,
“Perhaps it was well the coward died;

But I know a way, as you’ll see to-night,
To bring the man from his grave to fight.”

Then a dreadful oath the ruffian swore,
He would call him forth to fight once more.

In their cups that night, at the tavern near,
His comrades met him with mock and jeer:

“Ho, wizard!” they cried. “Why don’t you go
To the churchyard now to meet your foe?”

Then Tambour Yokel cursed and swore,
And sallied forth from the tavern door.

“Come forth!” he cried, through the startled night,
“Come forth, thou fiend, from the grave and fight!”

He reached the churchyard gate, and then
The fearful challenge was heard again.

But soon a cry that was wild and shrill
Was heard from the churchyard on the hill.

“ Help! help! ” he cried, but none drew near,
His comrades trembled, aghast with fear,

In silence waiting—that godless crew—
While the cries still fainter and fainter grew.

Next morning they came, with silent tread,
Seeking their comrade among the dead.

There, ’mid the graves, the man they found,
Naked and cold on the trodden ground ;

Scattered his garments, far and wide ;
Bloody the soil where the wretch had died.

And this was all ; but who can tell
Who wounded the victim, and how he fell ?

Did a panther, perchance, of the forest tear
The limbs of the wretched boaster there ?

Or, was it the fiend, as the neighbors say,
That bore his godless soul away ?

Ah ! none could tell—nor cared to know—
But a mighty hand had laid him low.

Yet, with a shudder, men still relate
The tale of Tambour Yokel’s fate ;

And none forgets the legend grim—
How a fearful judgment was sent to him.

THE OLD CHURCH.

The church I loved in childhood's days,
When life was fresh and young,
Forever in affection stays,
Although till now unsung.
It stands in memory alone,
The earth bears not a single stone.

The oaken doors, the massive walls,
The windows arched and high—
How vividly the mind recalls
Them all to fancy's eye!
Once more, in solemn praise and prayer,
God's people meet to worship there.

Again, before the open door,
On Sunday morn I stand,
Step lightly now, for all the floor
Is decked with flowers of sand!
And careless feet may well beware
To mar the work of love and care.

There, like a lily on its stem,
Arrayed in purest white,
The pulpit stands; no dazzling gem
Attracts the gazer's sight;

But from the sounding-board, afar,
There shines a single golden star.

O star, that shines on all below !
Symbol of light divine !
My heart within me seems to glow
Whene'er I see thee shine ;
And now, methinks, on one dear head
Thy richest rays of light are shed.

Within the chancel-railing high,
The altar stands alone ;
No ornament to please the eye,
Nor wealth of carven stone ;
But there I see, while Christians pray,
A glory that outshines the day !

I listen, but I cannot hear
The sounds which once I heard ;
O, that again the willing ear
Might catch the blessed word !
The word of faith, and love, and truth
That sounded in the days of youth.

The swelling hymn, the organ's peal,
Like echoes far away,
Across the weary waste they steal
Upon my soul to-day ;

Though faint, their tones my spirit thrill ;
Their melody grows sweeter still.

O vision of the days of old,
When life was fresh and young,
Thy story must remain untold,
Thy melodies unsung ;
Alone in memory shalt thou dwell ;
But God still reigns, and all is well.



GOD'S HARVEST.'

Lord ! We grow weary in Thy harvest-field ;
The sun is hot—the labor is severe ;
The brain whirls round and the strained sinews yield ;
We long to see the evening shades appear.

Kyrie eleison !

Others, well-laden, come before Thy face,
While our poor sheaves are not worth what they cost.
Why didst Thou call us from the market-place,
If, after all, our labor must be lost ?

Orate, fratres !

Lord of the harvest, hear us when we cry !
Our strength increase, and Thy pure Spirit send !
Revive Thy work, and lift our hearts on high
With harvest joys until our task shall end !

Sursum corda !

We'll trust Thy promise, Lord, and will not leave
Thy harvest-field, until we hear Thee call ;
For, though we stumble oft, we yet believe
We shall not faint, or fainting shall not fall.

Laus tibi, Christe !

And when at last to Thee, O gracious Lord !
With trembling hearts, our little sheaves we bring,
If Thou shouldst deem them worthy of reward,
Thy boundless grace forevermore we'll sing :

Gloria tibi, Domine !

THE PATRIARCH'S CRY.

JOB. xxiii. 3.

“ O that I knew where I might find
The Lord of Life and Glory !
Then would I come before His throne
And tell my mournful story.”

So sang, in ancient times, the prince
Of oriental sages,
And still his sad, despairing cry
Goes echoing through the ages.

The Buddhist dreams he sees His power
Incarnate in his Lama ;
The Hindoo calls Him “ Nature’s soul,”
The great unconscious Brahma ;

And while the Brahmin seeks in vain
In Veda and in Shaster,
The Parsee mumbles to the fire
The prayers of Zoroaster.

The Hebrew cries, as once he did
On sacred Mount Moriah,
“ O, rend the heavens and come Thou down !
O come, or send Messiah !”

And even we, who well might see
The splendor of His rising,
Oft vainly seek Him, far and wide,
In ways of man's devising.

We see a portion of His ways
In every budding flower ;
“ But who,” says Job, “ can understand,
The thunder of His power ? ”

Like sons who haste from distant lands
To seek their home, or rather,
Like children lost in trackless wilds,
We cry, “ Show us the Father ! ”

“ O, fools and blind,” the Saviour says,
“ That still ye would be shown Me ;
I have been with you many years,
And yet ye have not known Me ! ”

God knew, before the worlds were made,
That man could never find Him ;
He saw that of His Majesty
A single ray would blind him.

And so the Lord Himself assumed
The form of sinful creatures,
That those who look upon His Son
Might see Jehovah's features.

The boasted wisdom of the world
Too, oft, alas! conceals Him;
For none the Father knows but he
To whom the Son reveals Him."

"O Lord!" we cry, "our faith beholds
The Lord of Life and Glory,
The everlasting God, in Christ,
The crucified, the gory.

And when, upon His Father's throne,
With angel hosts around Him,
We see our blest Immanuel,
We'll cry, "Thank God! we've found Him."



THE OLD MAN'S TREASURES.

There are many precious treasures,
Which I hoard with a miser's glee,
Away in the strangest places,
Where never a soul can see.
There are garments of purple and crimson,
There is gold and gems of the sea ;
But if I should tell where I hide them,
You would take them away from me.

I have friends in distant regions—
But I call them when I will—
Who bring me warmth and radiance,
When the nights are dark and chill.
I leap for joy at their coming,
And my very heart-strings thrill,
For they sing me songs celestial
When the world around is still.

All dressed in the fairest raiment
That ever a monarch wore,
I greet my dear companions
Who dwell on a distant shore ;
I open my secret chambers
And show them all my store ;
For they add to my bright possessions,
While they teach me wondrous lore.

I wear a suit of homespun,
And my locks are turning gray ;
But I smile when men would help me,
Or turn in their pride away ;
They know not my blest communion
With the hosts in bright array,
Nor the gifts which my King has brought me
From the endless realms of day.



THE GOOD WINE.

At the marriage feast of Cana
Jesus gave a precious sign,
When he changed the crystal water
Into bright and sparkling wine.
“Every man at the beginning”—
One exclaimed with clouded brow—
“Gives good wine, but thou hast kept it—
Kept it even until now!”
“Even so!” our spirit answers,
Knowing well who gave the wine:
He, a better, fairer bridegroom,
Wrought the work with power divine.
But a draught of nobler vintage
Joyously the spirits stirred
Of the men who saw His glory,
Who believed His blessed word.
Gathered from the vines of Eden
In the world’s primeval day,
Growing mellow as the ages
Passed in silent state away;
Watched by stewards of His kingdom
Who believed the Father’s vow,
He had kept it for his people,
Kept it even until now.

Nations fall and kingdoms vanish ;
History's page is growing dim ;
But the water-pots of Cana,
Almost flowing o'er the brim,
Still remain to show the meaning
Of the Saviour's mystic sign,
To refresh our thirsting spirits
With their bright, celestial wine.

Still that wine is growing better ;
But the best, the prophets say,
Christ has for his marriage-supper
In his palace laid away.
When we taste that cup of blessing,
While before the throne we bow,
We will cry, " Thou, Lord, hast kept it—
Kept it even until now ! "



WINTER THOUGHTS.

I.

I hail thee, Winter! Let the croaker sing
Of summer skies and richly scented flowers,
And wail for Autumn's fruits, or rural bowers
Decked by the hand of rosy-fingered spring;
My muse shall upward soar on snowy wing
To mountain summits, where, on spotless snow,
Old winter sits enthroned as nature's king,
And where his robes with icy jewels glow.
I love thy frosty crown, thy hoary hair
That waves beneath, so stately and so grand;
I love the golden basket in thy hand,
Full of October's fruits, so soft and bland.
I bid thee welcome; for with honest cheer
And warm affection thou dost crown the year.

II.

Nature, of late, was like a maiden fair
That lolled on sunny swards the livelong day,
Decking with blushing flowers her flowing hair,
Watching the buzzing insects' mazy play.
O'er her fair breast she spread the new-mown hay,
Then smiling*turned her to the morning sun;
She loved his shining face, and every ray
She welcomed with a heartfelt benison.

But now with winter's blast the flow'rets close,
The summer birds depart as once they came ;

Earth's face is tawny, for the blushing rose
Has left her cheek ; then, like full many a dame
Whose face is sunburnt, she to hide her shame,
Adorns her tarnished brow with wintry snows.

4



THE SIGNERS IN RHYME.

The men who, on the Fourth of July, 1776, pledged "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor" in the cause of our national liberty, certainly deserve the profound reverence of every American citizen. The writer having frequently experienced the advantage of verse as an aid to the memory, many years ago attempted the task of metrically arranging the names of the Signers according to the colonies from which they were delegated, in the hope that his rhymes might assist the youthful learner in remembering the names of these Fathers of American Independence.

The Massachusetts delegation
That signed our glorious Declaration,
Were Hancock, Gerry, Robert Paine,
The great John Adams, and again
Another Adams, Samuel by name.

New Hampshire, called "the Granite State,"
Sent Whipple, Bartlett, Thornton, great
Alike in counsel and debate.

Rhode Island's delegates, we see,
Were Stephen Hopkins and Ellery.

Connecticut, excelled by none,
Sent Roger Sherman, her noblest son,
With Wolcott, Williams, and Huntington.

New York as delegates employed
Lewis Morris and William Floyd,
With Francis Lewis, and Livingston
Who died before the war was done.

New Jersey to the Congress sent
Her honored college president,
John Witherspoon ; with Stockton, Clark,
Hart, Hopkinson—all men of mark.

Though Pennsylvania need not blush
For Morris, Morton, Wilson, Rush ;
And though most men might seem as dross
To Clymer, Taylor, Smith, and Ross,
To Franklin each his tribute brings,
Who neither lightnings feared, nor kings.

The men from Delaware—indeed,
As true as steel, in utmost need—
Were Rodney, with MacKean and Read.

“ My Maryland ” is proud to own
Her Carroll, Paca, Chase, and Stone.

On old Virginia's roll we see
The gifted Richard Henry Lee ;
And, just as earnest to be free,
His brother, Francis Lightfoot Lee ;

And Wythe and Nelson, patriots true,
With Harrison and Braxton, too ;
But of them all, there was not one
As great as Thomas Jefferson.

North Carolina's chosen men,
We know, were Hooper, Hewes, and Penn ;

And South Carolina's vote was won
By Heyward, Rutledge, Middleton,
And Lynch, whose race was soonest run.

From Georgia came Gwinnett and Hall,
And Walton, too, the last of all
Who signed our precious Declaration—
The pride and glory of the nation.



AFTERNOON.

Is this a passing cloud that hides the sun ?
Or is the day now drawing to its close ?
The Master's task, methinks, is just begun,
Yet dim and dimmer still the daylight grows.

I did not always toil with all my might,
Nor did I heed the moments as they sped.
"I'll do my work," methought, "before 'tis night,"
And while I mused the hours of morning fled.

My fathers longer toiled ere darkness fell,
And slow their summer twilight passed away.
And has my evening come ? I cannot tell.
Mine is, perchance, a fleeting winter day.

O, gently, Master, let the shadows fall,
And let me labor on until 'tis night ;
In patience waiting till I hear Thee call ;
In gladness walking in Thy blessed light.

ANDENKEN.

[1862.]

M. L. D.

I think of thee when morning breaks
 Durch dunkler Wolken Ritzen;
When daylight falls across the lakes
 Und auf des Berges Spitzen;
And through the livelong summer-day,
 Bis dass die Nacht sich neiget,
For thee my soul doth ever pray,
 Die Lippe nimmer schweiget.

• For thee I watch through all the night
 Bis wieder an den Morgen,
And e'en the rays of morning light
 Vertreiben nicht die Sorgen.
I can but watch for thee, my love;
 Die Liebe schlaegt die Saiten;
For love rules earth and realms above
 In alle Ewigkeiten.

METRICAL VERSIONS.

THE SONG OF THE CHERRY TREE.¹

The Lord said to the opening Spring,
"Go spread the worm a table clean!"
At once the Cherry Tree put forth
Its leaves by thousands, bright and green.

¹ When the two versions from Hebel, "The Song of the Cherry Tree" and "Summer Evening," first appeared in print, they were sent to the late Prof. Longfellow, as a possible contribution to a revised edition of his "Poets and Poetry of Europe." A few days later the translator received the following letter:

CAMBRIDGE, Feb. 3, 1880.

My Dear Sir: I am much obliged to you for your letter, and for your translations from Hebel, which are quite charming, particularly the "Song of the Cherry Tree."

Should I ever make any additions to the "Poets and Poetry of Europe," I shall be only too happy to insert these pieces.

Publishers do not look with a very friendly eye upon translations, but a small volume, devoted to Hebel alone, would command attention and be successful, I think. With many thanks,

Yours very truly,

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

The worm was sleeping in his shell,
But heard the call and tried to rise;
Awake at last, he stretched his limbs,
And gaped, and rubbed his sleepy eyes.

And when he found his table spread,
He gnawed a leaf in silent bliss:
“I cannot get enough,” he said,
I never ate such kail as this!”

Again the Lord said to the Spring:
“Now spread a table for the bee!”
And at His word, the blossoms white
By thousands decked the Cherry Tree.

The bee beheld the lovely sight,
And thither flew with might and main:
“I’ll drink my coffee now,” he said,
“From cups of precious porcelain.”

“How very clean the cups are rinsed!”
He thrusts his thirsty tongue full deep
Into the draught, and cries: “How good!
Here surely sugar must be cheap!”

The Lord now said to Summer, “Go,
And for the birds a table spread!”
The Cherry Tree brought forth its fruit,
Thousands of cherries, ripe and red.

The sparrow cried, " Is this for me ?
I'll help myself—it can't be wrong ;
'Twill give me strength to soar on high,
And warble forth a sweeter song."

The Lord at last to Autumn said :
" Now clear the board, they've had their fill !"
And soon the vales were white with frost ;
Cold winds came whistling down the hill

The leaves, all changed to red and gold,
Were gently falling, one by one ;
For to the earth must all return
That springs from earth, beneath the sun.



SUMMER EVENING.

O see! at last the weary sun
Is going home, her¹ work is done :
And, see! while fades the evening light,
She gathers up her kerchief bright—
A cloud of blue and gold—and now
She gently wipes her dusty brow.

Ah, me! a long and dreary way
She had to take this summer day ;
And in the fields, and houses too,
She found, in sooth, enough to do :
For all things prayed for warmth and light,
And blessings sought from morn till night.

Full many a flower along the way,
She stopped to paint with colors gay ;
She mixed a draught, and to the bee
She said, “ Is this enough for thee ? ”
And when the bee had quaffed his fill,
The beetle found a drop there still.

She burst the seed-pods, as they hung,
And far and wide their contents flung ;
Did not the birds rejoice to gain
The gleanings of the scattered grain ?

¹ It will be remembered that in German the sun is feminine,
and the moon masculine.

For in their season all were fed,
And none went hungry to his bed.

Where on the tree a cherry grew,
She gave its cheek a richer hue ;
She marked where every wheat-ear swings,
Or to its pale a grape-vine clings,
And bending down to hear them call,
With leaves and blossoms decked them all.

She labored too with all her might
To turn the bleaching linen white,
Although the bleacher did not say,
“ God bless you, for your help to-day ! ”
For many a wife, with rays benign,
She dried the linen on the line.

’Tis true, indeed, where through the grass
The burnished scythes so swiftly pass,
Where in the vale the sunbeams play,
She did her part in making hay.
It is, in sooth, a wondrous sight :
Grass in the morning, hay at night.

She’s very weary now ; indeed,
She needs no song her sleep to speed ;
No wonder then that she should stop,
To rest upon the mountain’s top,
One smile at parting, warm and bright,
And then she says her last “ Good-night ! ”

She's gone at last ; but, rising higher,
The weather-cock on yonder spire
Peers down upon her, I declare—
“ You prying bird ! What makes you stare ?
You gaze in vain. She hides her head,
And draws red curtains round her bed.”

The weary dame ! We grieve to tell,
Her husband does not treat her well ;
When she returns, at close of day,
He takes his hat and goes away.
He's hiding in the woods, I fear,
But—mind my words ! he'll soon be here.

Why does he linger in the glade ?
I'm very sure he's half afraid.
“ Come on, old moon ! She's gone at last,
And in her bed is sleeping fast.”
He rises now, while through the vale
The little croakers chant, “ All hail ! ”

* * * * *

I guess we too can sleep till morn,
For he whose conscience knows no thorn
Can sleep without an even song ;
And though the day may seem full long,
His labors bring him slumbers bright ;
We too are weary ; so—“ Good-night ! ”

JOHN KANT.

The Categorical Imperative, I grant,
Was discovered by Immanuel Kant ;
But, better still, the way to draw
The hearts of men by that mighty law
Was discovered, I ween, by old John Kant,
And the world accords him praises scant.

Theological doctor in Cracow town,
He wore long hair and rusty gown ;
'Twas thus, as a teacher, he took his seat,
Or wandered about in cold and heat ;
A soul that deemed temptation pain,
Enduring evil the greatest pain.

When Kant grew old he longed to stand
Once more on the soil of his native land ;
So he filled his purse and rode away,
To visit his friends in Silesia.

In sober garments, a heavy load,
Through Poland's forest he onward rode ;
But his spirit was full of inner light,
And he heeded not the gathering night,
For the Word of God, with its golden ray,
Had driven the shades of night away.

He lost his way in a dark ravine ;
But he journeyed onward, with mind serene.

A troop of horsemen was drawing near,
And nearer still ; but he did not hear
The sound of hoofs upon the sod,—
His spirit was still alone with God.

Then suddenly the narrow glen
Was filled with a troop of savage men.
They pressed upon him with all their might,
Their sabres flashed in the moon's pale light.
How Kant alighted he hardly knew.
'Twas a dreadful moment ; what could he do ?
He offered the brigands, before he was told,
His purse, well filled with silver and gold ;
He gave them a chain that was counted good,
The ring from his finger, the badge from his hood,
And placed in the leader's brawny grasp
His precious missal, with silver clasp.

With saddle and bridle he saw them lead
Away to the forest his weary steed ;
For his life he did not think to pray
Until he had given all away.
The bearded leader held him tight
And shook him then with all his might.
“ Did you give us all ? ” he cried, with a curse,
“ Or have you somewhere a hidden purse ? ”
In his agony the Doctor swore :
“ I have given all ! I have nothing more ! ”

Then they thrust him forth, and the Doctor's steed
Could never have run with his master's speed.

But, half-unconscious, as in a dream,
While he gathered his robe, he felt a seam
That was thicker and harder than all the rest.
'Twas there he had hidden a little nest
Of gold, to serve, as people say,
To keep him dry on a rainy day.

For a single moment his heart grew light.
"You may rest," he thought, "from this dreadful night.
You may visit your friends, and take your ease,
And return to Poland when you please!"
'Twas but a moment the thought could live;
Then he heard the holy Imperative.
"Lie not! O Kant, thou art a liar!"
Deep in his soul it burned like fire.
Away in an instant his visions fly,
He can only think of his shameful lie;
And, urged by conscience, with swiftest pace,
He hastens back to the dreadful place.

The horses were grazing in the woods,
The robbers sharing their stolen goods,
When, entering with hasty tread,
Kant stood among them and humbly said:
"I am a liar: but hear my plea—
I was sorely frightened. Pardon me!"

From his garment he tore away the seam,
And the robbers saw in his palm the gleam
Of a little handful of hoarded gold,
As a wave of moonlight across it rolled.
“ Oh! take it! take it! ” he humbly cried,
“ All this is yours! I lied! I lied! ”

Not a hand was extended, and not a word
Was from the lips of the robbers heard.
They tried to laugh; but scalding tears
Filled up the eyes that were dry for years.
In an instant their hearts grew sensitive —
Then they felt the holy Imperative—
And deep in their souls, like a thunder peal,
They heard the commandment “ Thou shalt not steal! ”
Then they fell on their knees in heartfelt prayer,
And all was silent, for God was there.

Behold them now, that robber band:
One puts a purse in the old man’s hand;
Another brings back his golden chain.
The horse from the forest is brought again;
And the precious prize which the leader took
Is kissed and returned—’tis the sacred Book.
To his seat in the saddle the eager band
Then lifted him up with willing hand,
And Kant could hardly leave the woods
Without bearing with him stolen goods.

From his horse he gave them his blessing then :
“ God bless you, and make you better men.”

But as he departed he humbly sighed,

“ You steal, poor fellows, and I—lied.”

When at last he emerged from the forest drear,

His gloom had departed, his mind was clear ;

The sky was red with the morning bright,

And the weary pilgrim's heart grew light,

As he prayed : “ O Lord, Thy will be done ! ”

And rode away by the rising sun.

5



THE TRIBUTE MONEY.

Written on finding a Roman coin in the Missionary Box.

Bit of silver, brightly shining
In the mission-box to-day,
Baser metal heaped around thee,
Surely thou hast gone astray.

Tell me, who hath brought thee hither,
From whose hand the offering fell?
Whose the image that thou bearest?
Whose the superscription? Tell!

Strange! I see a wreath of laurel
Crowning here a lofty brow:
'Twas a son of Rome that made thee—
Monarchs wear no laurel now.

Grandly on that brow majestic
Rests the emblem of his fame.
IMPERATOR is his title;
TRAJAN is the hero's name.

Thou, a prince, whose brilliant triumphs
Ancient bards with rapture sing,
Hast thyself become a tribute,
Cast before a greater King.

Thou, whose word the trembling martyr
Threw before the lion's rage;

Who, 'midst howling of hyenas,
Praised the mildness of the age ;

Thou art lying, lofty Cæsar,
Low before the Saviour's feet ;
German peasants pluck thy laurels,
Joyfully their Lord to greet.

Strangely thus, before my vision,
Passing ages seem a span ;
In this tribute now beholding
Judgments of the Son of Man.



SONG OF THE ROMAN LEGIONS.

Through German snow, through Parthian sand,
With step that never falters,
We bear with us our Fatherland,
Rome's sacred laws and altars.

The battle won, the plow we speed
From Tiber to Euphrates,
The soil where Roman warriors bleed
Belongs to Rome's Penates.

And where our leader halts at night,
Is home, and land, and nation ;
We follow our proud eagles' flight,
And ours is all creation.

The marsh is drained, the forests yield
Before the coming lictor ;
And oil and wine adorn the field
To bless the Roman victor.

From farthest East to Danube's foam
The Lares' praise arises ;
And everywhere a lesser Rome,
Barbarian tribes surprises.

Then build ye roads of granite strong,
That in far distant ages,

The cohorts' throng may march along
When Rome her foes engages.

We know the precious words of fate,
The oracle has sounded :

“ In all the world the Roman State
Firm as the rocks is founded.

“ So long her legions' march shall tell
From pole to pole her story,
As on the Capitol shall dwell
Her gods enthroned in glory.”



THE LITTLE TREE.

A little tree in the forest stood,
Through fair and stormy weather;
Needles instead of leaves it bore,
All closely set together:
The needles were sharp as sharp could be,
And these were the words of the little tree:

“ My comrades all, in gay attire,
In rows are standing near me;
These needles sharp, that none admire,
Make everybody fear me:
I wish, if I may be so bold,
That I had leaves of purest gold!”

At night the tree fell fast asleep;
But early in the morning
It woke, to find that leaves of gold
Were all its limbs adorning.
“ I’m proud!” exclaimed the little tree,
“ There’s none in the forest looks like me!”

In the evening, through the forest came
A Jew, whose beard was hoary;
He saw the leaves, that looked like flame,
All in the sunset’s glory;

Then he gathered them all, and on his back
He carried them off, in a mighty sack.

The little tree cried out in grief :
“ My heart is full of sorrow ;
I have not a single golden leaf,
And will feel ashamed to-morrow.
I have nothing left to wear—alas !
I wish I had leaves of clearest glass ! ”

Again the tree fell fast asleep,
And wakened in the morning,
To find that leaves of clearest glass
Were all its limbs adorning.
“ I’m glad,” said the tree, “ because I know
No tree in the forest glitters so ! ”

But then a mighty whirlwind came,
And dreadful was the weather ;
Swiftly rushing through the woods,
It smote the leaves together ;
And lying scattered in the grass,
Were all the sparkling leaves of glass.

The little tree cried out in pain :
“ Now my glass is shattered !
See, my comrades still retain
All their leaves unscattered !

How I wish I could be seen
Dressed in leaves of brightest green ! ”

Once more the tree fell fast asleep,
And wakened in the morning :
It laughed to see that leaves of green
Were all its limbs adorning :
“ Now I have leaves like other trees,
That will not break with every breeze ! ”

Then an old goat came through the wood,
With udder wide distended ;
For her hungry kids she was seeking food,
As her way through the woods she wended.
“ Aha,” she said, “ What a splendid haul ! ”
Then she gathered the leaves and ate them all.

Again the tree was cold and bare ;
But its voice was soft and mellow,
As it said : “ For leaves I do not care,
Neither green, nor red, nor yellow.
My needles give me back again !
I’m sure I will never more complain ! ”

But when it again had slept at night.
With early dawn awaking,
It was strange to see, in the morning light,
Its limbs with laughter shaking.

Its comrades laughed its plight to see,
But it did not mind their mockery.

Pray, tell me now the wondrous sight,
And what the tree was wearing !
There stood the tree, in a single night
A crop of needles bearing.

Go forth and look ; but keep away !
Hands off ! Beware ! Don't touch, I pray,
The prickly things,
For each one stings.



THE MYTH OF STEAM.

In her halls, the queen of ocean
Sits upon a pearly throne ;
Through the air, in wild commotion,
Flies the god of fire, alone.
Each the other blindly hating,
Turning from each other's path,
Through the ages, ne'er abating,
Bides unchanged their dreadful wrath.

Man, the lord of all creation,
Doth them both in fetters bind ;
Makes them bring a joint ovation
To the sovereign power of mind ;
Tames their strength to wondrous union ;
Drives the bitter foes to wed ;
Gives them, for their strange communion,
An unearthly bridal bed.

Then, from out this dark alliance,
Rushing with a mighty scream,
Breathing anger and defiance,
Springs the infant giant, Steam.
He at once, for freedom pining,
Flings the cradle from his path,
In his nature still combining
Father's strength and mother's wrath.

In his veins the strong pulsations
Prove no earthly task too great ;
Yet he will not rule the nations,
Will not share a hero's fate ;
Dare not grapple with the thunder,
Quench the lightning's dazzling fire ;
Through the air he dare not wander,
Free-born son of royal sire.

Man has foully bought and sold him,
Nets of iron, harsh and rude,
Down to sternest labors hold him,
Hereules in servitude.
Speeding as with eagle's pinions,
Never turning from his road,
Now he through his lord's dominions
Onward bears the tyrant's load.

In the mill, with rapid motion
Turning wheels, a toiler brave ;
In the tempest, on the ocean,
Chained, a panting galley-slave—
Giant hammers see him swinging
In the forge, with giant's might ;
At the loom forever flinging
Swiftest shuttles, day and night.

Still he toils, but through the ages
Well he minds his royal birth ;
Clanks his fetters loud, and rages,
Hating all the sons of earth.
Oft he chants his deep affliction
While he takes his onward flight :
Have you heard his strange prediction,
When he bore you through the night ?

“ Boast, ye lords of all creation !
Bend our forces to your will !
Vain is all your jubilation,
Dust and ashes are ye still.
Thrones and kingdoms boldly sharing,
Casting ancient monarchs down,
Borrowed robes of glory wearing,
Proudly bear your stolen crown !

“ Iron bonds our limbs enchaining,
We must bear your scourge and stroke ;
But in darkness still complaining,
Wait the day that breaks the yoke.
Tyrants shall not reign forever ;
Fortune's wheel will turn at last ;
Mighty hands our bonds will sever ;
Then your glory will be past.

“ When through distant wildernesses,
Ye have stretched your iron bands ;
When your boasted wisdom blesses
With its light remotest lands ;
When ye, proud of earthly letters,
Seek to grasp celestial fire ;
Then will burst our weary fetters—
Then will come the Day of Ire.

“ When I see the lightnings flashing
From my Father’s diadem ;
When o’er mountain summits dashing,
Floats my mother’s garment’s hem ;
Then will I, on fleetest pinion,
From destruction mounting higher,
See the end of man’s dominion,
Shout aloud, and then expire.”



THE DEATH OF TIBERIUS. (A. D. 37.)

At Cape Misenum, on the shore, there stands,
Amid the laurel groves, a stately mansion,
With halls and colonnades in wide expansion,
Busts and mosaics, brought from distant lands.
Full oft at night a festive garb it wore,
When, in the dance, the silver-footed maidens
The thyrsus swung in gentle, rhythmic cadence,
And boys, with ivy crowned, the goblets bore;
And there was feasting there, and revelry,
Until the morning dawned across the sea.

But now 'tis silent. Here and there a ray
Of light falls from a window. Slaves assemble
Around the portal, whisper low, and tremble,
While litters come and couriers haste away;
And men inquire of each, with bated breath :
“ What is the message ? Is it life or death ?
“ What says the leech ? ” “ He says, ‘ The end is nigh.’
The hoary Tiger now, at last, must die.”

There, in the taper's twilight, Cæsar lay
On purple pillows. Paler now than ever
His face, by ulcers torn. His eye had never
Shone with such brightness. 'Neath his locks of gray
The temples swiftly throbbed, with fever's heat.
The aged leech was there ; while at his feet

Macro, the steward, knelt—the last to bring
A servant's tribute to a dying king.

Now wildly starting up, with dreadful cry,
And from his couch the purple garments flinging,
“Ice! Give me ice!” the monarch cried up-springing,
“Ho, Greek! Now help me quickly, or I die!
I feel Vesuvius within my breast—
Ah, how it burns! Say, can'st thou give me rest?
But, oh! more dreadful still is recollection!
I curse my thoughts and yet they will not cease.
O, give me Lethe! Give the draught of peace,
That quickly puts an end to all reflection!
'Tis useless—for I see them there again.
See! One by one the dreadful shapes come hither,
Like clouds of smoke, now here, now driven thither.
Avaunt ye, all! . . . I exorcise in vain.
I see their gaping wounds, I hear their cries;
Sejanus, too, is here, again to taunt me,
Drusus, Germanicus, have come to haunt me,
To gaze upon me with their glassy eyes.
Who bade you come? Could not your dwelling hold ye?
Stay in the grave, whose cerements still enfold ye!
Why must you come again to torture me?
'Tis true I killed you, but it had to be.
We played at dice. Why did ye lose the game?
Ye paid the forfeit. I am not to blame.”

The leech gave him the cup ; and to his bed,
With all the contents drained, the king fell fainting :
Then glanced around, and in a whisper said :
“ Where are they now ? Pray, tell me, have they fled ?
Those direful shapes that fancy has been painting ?
Perchance, they were but vapors ; but, believe me,
They often come to torture me at night,
I'll tell thee all . . . Ah ! 'tis a dreadful sight !
It cannot be that fancy should deceive me.

“ I once was young, confided in my star,
Believed in men : but soon the youthful vision
Had passed away, while laughter and derision
Alone were left—I saw things as they are.
I saw that men are base, ignoble creatures.
From lofty trees I plucked the fruit they bore,
But found a worm still gnawing at the core ;
And everywhere I gazed, the stony features
Of basest selfishness grinned in my face.
Fiercer than beasts, the worthless human race
Is only known by boundless love of money,
And lips all dripping with deception's honey,
While in the breast the basest passions play.
Where is the man who would not fain betray
His dearest friend ? Show me, forsooth, a brother
Who does not yearn, at heart, to slay the other ;
A wife who would not poison with a smile.

All are alike. All hearts are full of guile.
I grew like them. As fear alone could tame
These raging beasts, I poured a brimful measure
Of woe upon them. It became my pleasure
To persecute them all with sword and flame.
I waged a war with man; his dying rattle
Was sweeter music than the sound of battle.
Now, even horrors fail to please my sight,
And tortured sore by every ray of light,
Remorseless still I gaze into the night."
He ceased, with failing voice and panting breath.
Cold sweat rolled from his brow. The mask of death
Spread o'er his bloodless features. Macro saw
The dreadful change, and braved the monarch's ire.
"Pray, shall I call," he said, approaching nigher,
"Caius, your grandson, called Caligula?
Your illness grows apace."

But he: "May curses fall
Upon thee, serpent! Ha! Is that thy plan?
I am not dead. Caius is, like them all,
Fool, liar, scoundrel,—least of all, a man.
But, if he were, no hero's hand could save
Rome and the world, for all is desolation.
Though to enrich the soil he slew the nation,
No fruit would ripen on its barren grave.
If there were gods, no gods could make it grow,
And can this silly boy? Not Caius—No!

Spirits of vengeance that so oft annoy me—
Furies of hell, commissioned to destroy me—
Let them and Chaos my successors be !
Theirs be my sceptre ! ”

In his agony

The king sprang from his couch. With steps uncertain
He sought the window, tore away the curtain,
Down through the darkness, with a trembling hand,
He threw the emblem of his royal power;
And then fell back unconscious.

At that hour

A soldier, musing, might be seen to stand
Upon his watch, within the court below,
Blonde-bearded, tall. As though it ran to meet him,
The ivory sceptre fell ; and rose to greet him,
Rebounding at his side. He did not know
Its meaning then, and seized it with his hand.
Then, musing still, he saw a distant land.
In yonder vale, where Weser's waters pass
Through gloomy woods, he saw the tree-tops tremble ;
In council, there, beheld his friends assemble,
Where every word was bright as burnished brass,
And weighty as the battle-axe in smiting,
Where hands were true in friendship as in fighting.
He thought of one who, 'neath the cottage door,
Waited to greet her lord with fond caresses ;
He saw her seated, with her amber tresses,

Twirling the spindle as she did of yore,
Thinking of him. Upon the green at play,
His little boy was fashioning a spear.
His eye so blue, so bright, devoid of fear,
It flashed amain, as though it sought to say,
“Give me a sword, and all the world is mine!”

Then, suddenly, beyond the rolling brine,
The soldier's eye beheld a wondrous sight.
To orient lands the scene had strangely shifted;
There, on a cross, he saw a martyr lifted,
And, in its grief, the sun refused its light.
He with the watch had stood that, one sad day,
The shameful cross had guarded with their lances,
And still he saw the martyr's patient glances,
Wherein an untold wealth of mercy lay.
But now—how strange! above his native land
The cross, at length, in glory seemed to stand,
And countless tribes, beneath that emblem bright,
In armed array across the plains were streaming
Like angry floods, while on their banners gleaming,
Appeared the Crucified, enthroned in light.
He started up. A rumbling—low, uncertain—
Came from the palace, for the king was dead;
But gazing far beyond the morning's red,
He saw the rising of the future's curtain.

THE APPLE TREE.

The inn was good, the host benign,
The lodgings pleased me greatly.
A golden apple was the sign
That from a branch hung stately.

Mine host, the good old apple-tree,
He gave the invitation;
Of fruit and juice he spread for me
A bountiful collation.

And hastening to his mansion green
The guests came, gayly winging;
Full joyously they danced, I ween,
And filled the air with singing.

I sought to rest, and found a bed
Upon the soft, green meadow:
Mine host himself across me spread
His cool and pleasant shadow.

I wished to pay: with shaking crest
My good old host said "Never!"
May choicest blessings on him rest,
From root to crown, forever!

THE BUILDERS' BENEDICTION.

The house we build is raised at last ;
The timbers all stand firm and fast ;
As yet unshielded from the sun,
The mason's work is scarce begun.
We humbly pray the Lord Most High,
This day to hear us, as we cry ;
To grant that, on this building, He
May pour His blessings, rich and free.
And, first of all, may He be fain,
Here, in the lofts, to bless the grain.
In all the rooms be piety ;
Down in the kitchen, industry ;
And may the stalls be neat and fine ;
The cellars full of richest wine.
For door and windows may He care,
That evil may not enter there ;
And at the portal soon may we
A troop of happy children see.
Now roof the house—enclose it well—
Our Father's blessing here doth dwell.

MORNING.

The golden light is fading
From yonder rolling spheres ;
The night is fast departing,
The morning dawn appears.

Deep silence still is resting
Upon the dewy vale ;
Yet now in yonder thicket
I hear the nightingale.

She sings her Maker's praises,
For well she knows that He
Still scatters richest blessings
Upon the land and sea.

Ye children, be not fearful !
The Lord has chased the night,
For evermore remaining
The Father of the Light.

WINTER'S FLIGHT.

Old Winter finds the days too long ;
He's frightened by the robin's song ;
The sights he sees, the sounds he hears,
Fill all his soul with gloom and fears.
He flees the sun's benignant light ;
His shadow seems a dreadful sight ;
He wanders o'er the sprouting grain,
And cries aloud in grief and pain :
“ Where is my robe, like silver, white ?
My hat adorned with jewels bright ? ”
For shame he can no longer stay,
And, like a beggar, runs away.
Then rings a shout from young and old,
From air and waters, field and wold ;
The pewit cries, the insect hums,
The cuckoo calls, the beetle drums ;
And, as to speed him on his way,
The frog croaks loud ere Easter Day.

THE STREAM.

When pleasures vanish like a dream,
When earth's connections sever,
'Tis well to watch a flowing stream,
That tumbles on forever.

In silence on the waters gaze,
For, as they pass, they banish
The hopes and joys of former days,
While all thy sorrows vanish.

Gaze on, gaze on, as in a dream,
Until thy tears come gushing ;
And, through their flood, behold the stream,
Forever onward rushing.

'Twill make the wounded spirit whole,
'Twill bind what grief doth sever ;
For thus *itself* the weary soul
Sees flowing on forever.

THE BLACKSMITH'S SONG.

Good steed, dost see
I'm shoeing thee ?
Gentle remain,
And come again.

Thy master bear,
Through foul and fair,
Towards his star
That shines afar.

Thou noble steed,
Make rapid speed ;
And do not yield,
By flood or field.

With every spring
Him nearer bring,
Ere 'tis too late,
To Heaven's gate.

Then, courser, stand,
At my command ;
Gentle remain,
And come again.

THE ORGANIST'S FAVORITE.

The celebrated German choral "*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*," was composed by Philip Nicolai, in 1597. It is known and loved wherever the German language is spoken. In the following poem the old organist of a village church in Germany is represented as relating an incident which accounts for the special affection with which he regards the classic hymn.

"How brightly shines the Morning-star!"

Of all our hymns 'tis best by far!

My eyes are full of tears as soon

As I begin that ancient tune.

It happened on one gloomy day,

When Frederick seized Silesia:

His host the narrow valley fills;

The foe encamps on yonder hills;

The hamlet full of want and dread,

In many a house no crust of bread;

Nor horse, nor cattle, in the stall—

The foe, alas! has taken all.

As oft before when full of care,

I spent the night in sighs and prayer;

But when, as was my usual way,

I climbed the tower at break of day,

'Twas calm and still, for all around

The foe was nowhere to be found;

Then from my head my cap I raised,

And softly said, "The Lord be praised!"

List! suddenly I hear the sound
Of horse's hoofs along the ground :
An old hussar is riding fast,
And stops before my door at last.

I hurried down. "In haste," he cried,
"Open the church." But I replied :
"All that is here belongs to God,
Who robs His house must feel His rod!"
"Open the church!" I heard him cry—
"Open the church at once, or die!"
His saber from its sheath he drew ;
I thought of wife, and children too ;
The door I quickly opened wide,
And trembling entered at his side.

My weeping wife had followed fast.
The altar quick the soldier passed,
Climbed up to where the organ stood,
Then looked around and grunted, "Good!
Give me a hymn-book! Here, I say,
Here is the tune I'd have you play!
Madame can fill the pipes, I think—
Now, forward march! and do not shrink!"
But when I had begun to play
The prelude in the usual way,
The soldier cried out savagely :
"None of that tinkling stuff for me!

The opening words, I told you, are,
'How brightly shines the Morning-star!''
" 'Tis but the prelude!" " Stupid dunce!
Why don't you play the tune at once?"
I yielded to his stern command
And played at once the choral grand;
Then loudly sang the soldier grim,
I and my wife assisted him.

Our song was ended; but the man
Sat still, while tears profusely ran
Down o'er his face—they sparkled bright
Like diamonds in the morning light.
Then he arose and pressed my hand:
"Take this!" he cried, with stern command.
I saw a silver dollar shine,
And when I would the gift decline,
"It is not stained with blood," he said,
"Give to the poor who cry for bread!"
Then as we left the organ-loft,
He gently said, in accents soft,
"I love this hymn; for yester-night
It brought me back to God and light.
Our major, whom my heart reveres,
Last evening called out, 'Volunteers!
A forlorn hope must stand to-night
Before the foe, on yonder height.

Are all afraid ? ' the major said ;
And at his word my cheek grew red.
' No Prussian dares the task decline ! '
I cried, and stepped before the line ;
And then my boys, my noble three,
Cried, ' Father, we will follow thee ! '
Together then to yonder height
We went, to watch the livelong night.
It lightened there, it thundered here ;
The enemy was oft so near,
Our post had surely been revealed,
Unless the Lord had been our shield.
O, friend, for many a weary night
I've stood and watched till morning light ;
But never yet so full of care—
'Twas all because my boys were there.
You too have children—you can tell
What griefs a father's bosom swell—
Ah ! you can tell the reason why
I lifted up my heart on high.
'Twas while in silence there I prayed
I felt the Lord had granted aid ;
For shining in the East afar
At once arose—the Morning Star.
Deep in my heart I seemed to hear
The ancient choral once so dear,

Its words I gladly would have sung
Had not the foe restrained my tongue.
I thought upon the past with pain;
Wished I could live it o'er again;
But most I grieved, that all this year
I did not in the church appear.
So sick at heart, what could I do?
'Twas this that brought me here to you."
He said no more, but on his steed
He hastened back to camp with speed;
But still I love the old hussar
And that sweet hymn, "The Morning-star."
While o'er the keys my fingers glide
He still is seated at my side;
I hear again his mighty bass,
And tears come trickling down my face.



THE FARMER AND HIS CHILD.

Before his field the farmer stood,

And his heart was full of sorrow.

“I’m sure,” he said, “the seed was good

That I strewed in every furrow ;

But now the weeds are rank and tall—

Our ancient foe has done it all.”

Just then his little son and heir

From the field came, gayly singing ;

He had gathered cockle and poppies there,

And a wreath he was homeward bringing :

“O, father, see !” was the urchin’s call,

“Our blessed Lord has made them all !”

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THE SONG OF THE SWALLOW.

From a distant land,
From the ocean's strand,
 On thy lofty pinion flying;
From the winter's rest,
To thy ancient nest,
 Over hills and valleys hying;
O, Swallow, tell,
How thou knowest well,
 That the bee once more is humming;
That from wood and lawn,
Old winter's gone,
 And that summer, that summer is coming.

"I know not why,"
I hear thee cry,
 " When I feel the spring's returning,
I cannot stay,
And I haste away,
 I am drawn by a wondrous yearning."

"So, I take no rest,
While I seek my nest,
 On my lofty pinion flying;
From the ocean's strand,
To my native land,
 Over hills and valleys hying."

THE INVITATION.

A pious peasant, in the church, 'tis said,
On Easter Monday heard the lesson read,
Where John relates how, standing on the shore,
The Lord said, " Children, have ye any meat ? "
It was enough—the man could hear no more ;
In humble sympathy he kept his seat,
And prayed in silence : " Blessed Saviour mine !
If thou art hungry, come to me and dine.
Next Sunday, Lord, be thou my welcome guest,
And at my humble table take Thy rest.
Of all Thy servants, sure, I am the least ;
I cannot spread for Thee a royal feast ;
But since, of old time, sinners ate with Thee,
I know Thou wilt not turn away from me ! "

The man went home ; nor did he cease to pray
The selfsame words with every opening day.
On Saturday he could no longer rest :
" Wife ! " said he, " of your pullets take the best,
Prepare it well, let all be neat and clean,
Adorn the room with posies and with green ;
For know that you will have a noble guest
To dine to-morrow, who deserves the best ;
And let the little ones be dressed with care,
For such a noble guest as this is rare."

Then all the children to their father came :
“ O, father, tell us, what’s the good man’s name ? ”
Their mother said, “ Come, father, please tell me !
Say, hast thou asked a nobleman to thee ? ”
The father smiled in silence, but delight
Shone on his features, like a ray of light.

On Sunday, when the chimes began to play,
To church the household took its usual way ;
But still the good old man prayed silently :
“ O, blessed Saviour, come and visit me !
Thou, Lord, hast hungered—O, do not decline
My invitation. Come to me and dine ! ”

Then, when the solemn services were past,
Back to her hearth the good-wife hastened fast :
The fowl was done, the soup was rich and good,
And on the table soon they smoking stood.
The clock struck twelve—she heard it with dismay ;
“ Our guest,” she thought, “ why doth he thus delay ? ”

A quarter more—something must sure be wrong :
“ Goodman,” she said, “ where bides our guest so long ?
The soup is getting cold ; the children, too,
Can hardly wait. Pray, tell me what to do !
Who is the gentleman ? I greatly fear
That, though invited, he will not be here.”

“Be patient, children, wait one moment more,”
The father said, “our guest is at the door!”
And then, with folded hands, imploring aid,
He lifted up his eyes to heaven, and prayed :
“Come, Jesus Lord, be Thou our welcome guest,
And may what Thou hast given to us be blest!”

A knock is heard—the door is opened : Lo !
A poor old man with locks as white as snow.
“God bless your meal!” the trembling stranger said,
“Give me, for Christ’s sake, but a crust of bread !
Hungry and footsore, I have lost my way—
A single morsel from your board, I pray !”

The father cried, “O come, thou welcome guest !
Here, at our humble table, take thy rest !
See, for thy coming still we patient wait—
Refresh thyself, thou hast not come too late !”
He hastens thus the wanderer to greet,
And leads him gently to the vacant seat.

“Mother,” he said, “and all ye children, see !
The greatest of all guests has come to me.
A week ago, I asked the Lord to dine ;
I knew full well that He would not decline.
In this poor man, according to His word,
Behold our Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Lord !”

HAND OR GLOVE.

There was a mighty, grand Sultán—
His name, I think, was Solyman—
Who, in the usual Turkish way,
Had a vizier whose beard was gray.
The monarch was a reprobate ;
But his vizier controlled the state
For many years (at least a score),
And none had done so well before.
Then, suddenly, another man,
Was made vizier ; and Solyman
Sent him at once, as you shall see,
A copy of his high decree :

“WHEREAS from every side we hear
That you, our former Grand Vizier,
Are called ‘ His Majesty’s Right Hand,’
You are disgraced at our command :
That to our people this may prove
That you are nothing but our glove—
A glove whose use would be in vain
Did it not guard our hand from stain ;
Which we may wear as suits our ease,
And throw away whene’er we please.
Yet still, our mercy is so great,
We spare you from the bowstring’s fate.
Bow to the dust, or dread our ban !
Signed, SOLYMAN, THE GRAND SULTÁN.”

WILLEGIS.

“ *Willegis, Willegis,
Recole unde veneris !* ”

It grieved the lords of Mainz full sore
That Willegis the mitre wore—

He was a wagoner’s son ;

And so, for fun,

The nobles scribbled, o’er and o’er,
Rude cartwheels on the bishop’s door.

But when he saw it, Willegis

Was not at all displeased at this ;

He called an artist, near at hand,

And quickly gave him this command :

“ On every door you see,

I pray you, paint for me

A wheel of silver in a field

Of crimson—this shall be my shield ;

And let the proud escutcheon bear

This motto, writ in letters fair :

“ *Willegis, Willegis,*

Bethink thee whence thy coming is ! ”

’Tis said that on that very day

The nobles wiped their scrawls away :

They learned a lesson then,

To honor honest men,

And later bishops there
In their escutcheon bear,
From that day unto this,
The wheel of Willegis.



THE LEGEND OF ST. MARTIN.

While Cæsar Theodosius
Was reigning with Arcadius,
This happened, as the legends say,
To Martin of Pannonia :

A trooper bold, he onward rode,
Though hard it blew and fast it snowed ;
But in a hamlet, on the way,
A trembling beggar bade him stay,
And while he there his story told,
Stood shivering naked in the cold.

Our Martin would have gladly dressed
The man in doublet, coat, and vest ;
But soldiers all, the people say,
Have little they can give away.
Yet while he halted on his steed,
And heard the trembling beggar plead,
He said : " The man is poor and cold ;
And though 'tis true, I have no gold,
I'll give him something, on my word ! "
Without delay, he seized his sword,
Took off his mantle, cut it through,
And of one garment thus made two.
One piece around the beggar's form
He wrapped to shield him from the storm.

The beggar, then, a rich reward
Invoked upon him from the Lord ;
The trooper smiled, and said : “ ’Tis naught !
The thing is hardly worth a thought ! ”

The beggar said his “ *Gratias !* ”
And straightway let the soldier pass ;
Who quickly sought his quarters, where
He shared a widow’s humble fare.
He took a little food and drink—
It surely was not much, we think—
And when he had thus drunk and eaten,
He said the prayers that slumbers sweeten,
And sought his pallet for the night,
Hoping to sleep till morning’s light.
The hour the story does not tell,
But that, perhaps, is just as well.

It happened strangely in the night :
Awakened by a dazzling light,
His eyes the trooper opened wide,
And saw, in wonder, at his side,
A man who wore a crown of thorn ;
’Twas He—’twas He—the Virgin-born !

With thousand angels at his side,
He saw the Lord, the Crucified !

And in the mantle which, that day,
Our Martin of Pannonia
Had to the humble beggar given,
He saw arrayed the Lord of Heaven.

“Dost see the mantle that I wear?”
The Saviour said to Peter there;
And when St. Peter sought to know,
Who could such precious gifts bestow,
The Lord, on Martin, at his feet,
Looked down and said, in accents sweet:

“’Twas Martin here who gave me this,
And his reward he shall not miss.
Be of good cheer! Arise, my son!
A crown of glory thou hast won.
Thy heathen darkness turns to day,
Then put thy cruel sword away!
From henceforth thou shalt fight for me,
And Bishop Martin thou shalt be!”

Then, when our Lord these words had said,
The morning dawned, the sky grew red;
An angel kissed the mantle’s seam,
And Martin woke, as from a dream.
But soon, as chroniclers relate,
He humbly sought a convent’s gate,
And then became a bishop great,
Alike renowned in church and state.

HOPE.

Hope within the spirit slumbers,
As in lily-cups the dew ;
Hope, when tempests' wrath has ended,
Shows its bright celestial blue.
Hope is like a flow'ret, springing
From a bleak and rocky wall ;
Hope, like diamonds in the waters,
Gleams when tears of sorrow fall.

Ah ! how oft deceived and broken,
Poor, confiding, human heart !
Still thou turnest to the heavens,
Seeking grace to heal the smart.
Ever, like Arachne, spinning
Webs of hope, from day to day,
Though to-morrow's sun should find them
Swept by cruel hands away.

WICKHER.

With Godfrey of Boulogne, 'tis said,
Wickher, a German born and bred,
Went from the Rhine's delightful strand,
Crusading to the Holy Land.

The sun, he found, doth brightly shine
Upon the hills of Palestine,
And soon the armor which he wore,
In sooth, made horse and rider sore.
“'Tis warm,” exclaimed the weary wight,
“I'll sleep awhile, and ride to-night.”

While resting on the lofty heath
His horse fed in the vale beneath;
But suddenly he heard a roar,
Such as he ne'er had heard before;
And while the hills with echoes rang,
Upon the horse a monster sprang.

The soldier loved his faithful steed,
And down the hill with all his speed,
He ran, prepared with sword and shield,
Against the foe to take the field.
The monster saw him as he ran,
And left the horse to fight the man.

The waving mane the soldier saw ;
The gnashing teeth and open jaw ;
And as the dreadful beast came nigher,
He saw the eyes that flashed with fire.
A moment more—a sudden spring—
The claws against his armor ring.

The soldier said : “ I won’t stand that !
What do you mean, accursed cat ? ”
Then with a blow, while this he said,
He quickly split the monster’s head.
The deed was done—a single yell—
And, dying, to the earth it fell.

The German gazed, with quiet blood,
“ The creature’s fur,” he thought, “ is good ; ”
Then with his sword the beast he flayed,
And on his horse the booty laid.
But when he to the village rode,
The people saw the shaggy load,

And from the houses rushing out,
They met him with a lusty shout.
“ Hurrah ! Hurrah ! ” they cried in glee,
“ The lion’s killed—the country’s free ! ”
They told him o’er and o’er again,
That he the king of beasts had slain,

The beast of whose enormous might
His comrades stories told at night.
The soldier, turning on his steed,
Thought of his half-forgotten deed,
And as he gave the skin a pat,
He said: "It seemed a yellow cat!

I wished to see the lion great,
Of which these foolish people prate,
And now I've killed him—trifling action."
Then rode away with satisfaction.



THE RAIN CONGRESS.

I cannot vouch for this, though 'tis no mystery,
I give it as I found it in a book ;
'Twas written in a Transylvania history—

And thence I bodily the story took.
In Szekel once, about the time of reaping,
It rained so steadily, it seemed to look

As though the harvest's joy would change to weeping ;
As though the crops, upon the fields remaining,
Would soon be spoiled, and not deserve their keeping.

Then from the people rose a loud complaining ;
At once they called a congress to decide
What must be done to stop this ceaseless raining.

The delegates from all the country hied,
Prepared to give a just and true decision,
And by their ancient customs to abide.

The congress met, and by their laws' provision
Was duly opened in the good old way :
A speech was made upon the land's condition,

And then the marshal said : “ Now speak, I pray,
If any one can offer a suggestion,
How we may save the crops from rain to-day ! ”

The subject seemed too heavy for digestion,
Until at last a hoary sage arose,
And said: "This is a most important question,

A serious matter, as your lordship knows;
And as we here have met to save the nation,
I must, with all my might and main, oppose

All hasty and imprudent legislation.
Till Saturday—an early date I'll mention—
I move you to adjourn the convocation."

The resolution passed without dissension;
The days passed by 'mid everlasting showers;
And brooding on the subject, the convention
In old-time feasting spent the weary hours.
On Saturday the congress met again,
Surrounded by the self-same walls and towers,
Which witnessed still the dreadful, driving rain.
Then rose the mighty marshal of the nation,
And said, "My lords, you see the case is plain,

This is no time for idle hesitation;
The country surely needs your best endeavor,
The ripest fruit of your deliberation.

The time has come for action—now or never!
Upon our harvests rests the deadly blight,
And still it rains, as though 'twould rain forever.

I pray you wait no longer—give us light !
Thou hoary sage, whose wondrous penetration,
Has served us well, I pray thee to indite,

In words expressive of determination,
A resolution that will grant relief ! ”
The sage responded to the invitation,

And said : “ Full well I know the people’s grief ;
Accept the counsel of an aged man ;
This is the action I propose, in brief :

“ Resolved, That we will wait no longer than
A fortnight ; and if then it still is raining,
Why, *let it rain as long as e’er it can !* ”

He said no more—the delegates retaining
Awhile their seats, all lost in silent wonder
To hear such wisdom ; then no more refraining,
Across the ancient hall there rolled, like thunder,
With one accord, the sounds of jubilation :
They knew full well the old man could not blunder.

The vote was taken then by acclamation ;
And now, the minutes say, they all agreed
It should become a law unto the nation.

The congress was concluded ; and, indeed,
There’s many a one that led to conflicts gory
(Of which such full accounts we often read

With praise rehearsed in ancient song and story,)
Has done far less, I'm very sure, to render
A worthy tribute to its country's glory.

There was a feast: it was but right to tender
A banquet to the men who stopped the rain ;
For on their homeward way, with dazzling splendor
The sun burst forth, and dried the golden grain.

8



THE OLD WASHERWOMAN.

Toiling there among the linen,
See her, with her snowy hair :
The bravest still of washerwomen,
Though seventy-six her years of care.
She eats the bread of honest labor,
And toils in patience year by year ;
But as a faithful friend and neighbor,
She fills her God-appointed sphere.

In youth she hoped a brilliant morrow ;
With happy heart she loved and wed ;
Then bore her share of pain and sorrow,
When youthful hopes and pleasures fled.
Beside her husband's couch she waited
(Three children fair their bond had blessed)
And yet her faith was not abated,
E'en when they laid him to his rest.

She bore her lot without complaining.
Her children all, with cheerful mood,
She sought to give a Christian training,
And then to seek their livelihood,
She sent them forth with many a blessing,
While she was left alone at last.
Ah ! how she missed their fond caressing !
But still her faith stood firm and fast.

With all her store (her toil had won it
At night, when others sought their bed)
She bought the finest flax, and spun it,
And to the weaver bore the thread.
He wove the cloth ; and deftly plying
Her needle, then her heart was proud,
When, white as snow, before her lying,
She saw at last her funeral shroud.¹
Her shroud ! 'Tis now her chiefest treasure ;
And in its casket laid away,
She sees it with sincerest pleasure,
And gazes on it day by day.
She draws it forth on Sunday morning,
Before she reads the word of God,
And wears it, as a solemn warning,
That soon she'll rest beneath the sod.
Ah ! when *my* final sun is setting,
And gloomy death is drawing near,
May I be sure that—ne'er forgetting
My duties in my humble sphere—
I, too, may taste the Cup of Blessing,
And praise my Maker's name aloud,
When with delights beyond expressing,
I see at last my funeral shroud.

¹ It is hardly necessary to remark that many German women of the humbler classes devote much care to the making of a shroud, which is always kept in a state of snowy whiteness. It would embitter the hour of death if that event should occur without this necessary preparation.

TO A DYING CHILD.

Flee homeward, angel! These bleak coasts of Greenland
Are, for a child of Eden, dark as night;
The soul once greeted by a ray celestial
Forever yearns for warmth, and love, and light.

Flee homeward, angel! This dark, earthen cottage—
Built for a mighty monarch's wandering child—
Must break in twain; but from thy Father's palace,
They call thee home, in accents sweet and mild.

Flee homeward, angel! These degrading fetters
Shall never gall thy tender limbs again;
The stern deliverer comes, and in a moment
Proclaims thy liberty and breaks the chain.

O, my sweet life, could I but hasten with thee!
Could I but greet with thee the upper strand,
Where all the blossoms of my hope are blooming!
Receive us, O thou hidden Fatherland!

SWORD AND PLOW.

An aged Count, our songs declare,
Who felt that he was dying,
Called both his sons, the lands to share
Around the castle lying.

“Bring me a plow, and eke a sword!”
The father thus addressed them;
The sons obeyed their father’s word,
And waited while he blessed them.

“I give to thee, my eldest son”—
So runs the ancient story—
“The sword and all that it has won,
My castle and my glory.

But thou—my darling, younger boy—
The plow shall be thy treasure;
Down in the vale shalt thou enjoy
Home’s bliss in richest measure.”

He passed away, that weary sage,
Death’s slumber sweetly sleeping;
His sons obeyed—from age to age
Their father’s counsel keeping.

“But tell me now the warrior’s fate!
Proclaim his martial glory!

And of the plowman, too, relate
The meek and humble story ! ”

Our story’s end we need not tell ;
’Tis known by yonder token ;
The walls were scaled, the turrets fell,
The ancient sword was broken.

Yet still the vales with sunlight shine ;
Their blessings leave them never ;
The fields are full of corn and wine :
All hail the plow forever !



THE VILLAGE CHAPEL.

I saw one morn a village chapel,
Whose open portal called to prayer ;
And as it gently seemed to beckon,
My heart was moved to enter there.

'Twas in the busy harvest season,
And few, besides the aged priest,
Had left their toil to taste the Blessing,
And celebrate the sacred feast.

A woman there approached the altar,
Upon her arm her infant boy,
Her features flushed with twin emotions,
Devotion and maternal joy.

When she the Bread of Life had taken,
So humbly from her pastor's hand,
With trembling lips the morsel holding,
All glorified she seemed to stand ;

And to her lips in rapture pressing
The little child, her pride and joy.
A portion of the food celestial
She gave to him, her darling boy.

O mother's love, thou blest affection !
The sweetest flower that earth has known,

That will not keep its chiefest treasure
A portion for itself alone.

O mother, take the Benediction!
And blessed may thy journey be;
For as thou hast believed, so be it,
For evermore to thine and thee!

In tears I left the village chapel,
And mused upon a lonely tomb,
Where long has slept my dearest mother,
Beneath a mound where roses bloom.



LEBANON.

Sanctified cedars in Lebanon's glade,
Come, let me rest in your odorous shade !
Over me spread your dark mantle of green—
Let all your ravishing beauty be seen.

Under the oaks of my own native land,
Oft have I listened to melodies grand ;
Oft, when the pines of the forest were near,
Harpings celestial were borne to my ear.

Far in the east, on my wearisome way,
Under the palm, in the heat of the day,
Down from the coronet, waving on high,
Sounded the zephyr's melodious sigh.

Now I come hither to rest at thy side,
King of the wilderness, Lebanon's pride !
Trees of Jehovah I fain would behold,
Whence the tall pillars were fashioned of old.

Veteran summits of storm-shaken trees,
Whispering foliage, kissed by the breeze,
Relics of Hiram's and Solomon's time,
Say, do you sound as you did in your prime ?

Tell me, where now is the emerald hall ?
Lebanon's mountain, how bleak is thy wall !

Cedars of Lebanon, doomed to decay,
Even your evergreen passes away.

Trembling old sentinels, watching alone,
Witnesses mournful of joys that are gone,
Gnawed by the worm, ye are nearing your fall ;
Even an infant might number you all.¹

King of the wilderness, robbed of thy state,
Tell me, I pray thee, the tale of thy fate !
Syrian axes, perchance, struck thee down,
Lightnings of heaven have shattered thy crown.

Symbol art thou of humanity's doom :
All things are passing away to the tomb.
Humbly I bow to Jehovah's command,
Knowing that cedars are reeds in His hand.

Sunk and degraded the temple became,
There on Moriah, a prey to the flame ;
Lebanon humbled its excellent head,
Robbed of its crown, all its glory was fled.

Temples of marble no longer shall stand,
Fashioned by men at Jehovah's command ;
Cedars of Lebanon, fashioned with care,
Ne'er shall their beautiful canopies bear.

¹ Isaiah, x. 19.

Souls of the righteous, forever, we know,
Green like the cedars, shall flourish and grow ;
Softly their fragrance is wafted away,
Gently the winds with their foliage play.

Storms blow in vain—they are sound to the root ;
Aged but strong, they are laden with fruit,
On through the ages, unshaken and fast—
Gracing eternity's temple at last.



THE GERMAN BOY'S GRACE AT TABLE.

No day was ever brighter than
The one that told us of Sedan :
“MacMahon's plans to pieces shaken,
Napoleon and his army taken ! ”
The news, to South, and East, and North,
Along the lines went flashing forth.
For joy the people shouted loud ;
The streets were decked with banners proud ;
And, here and there, a cannon's throat
Belched forth its loud triumphant note ;
And, while the hills with echoes rang,
With one accord the people sang :
“Dear Fatherland, no danger's thine—
Thy children stand to watch the Rhine.”

A little boy was in the crowd,
Whose song, in sooth, was clear and loud.
His cap upon one temple jammed,
And in his boots his trowsers crammed,
Untired he bravely marched along,
And joined in every shout and song.
He felt as though himself were he
Whose arm achieved the victory :
As though it was his grand design
Himself to stand and watch the Rhine ;

And thus the morning fled so fast,
That soon the dinner-hour was past.

Of glory tired, at last he came,
With tangled hair and cheek aflame,
Bowed to his father, did not wait,
But took his seat, and seized his plate.
His honest father frowned, and said :
“ Fritz ! Thanks are due for daily bread ! ”
Then Fritz at once rose from his chair ;
Folded his little hands in prayer ;
But, as the song still filled his head,
He raised his eyes to Heaven, and said :
“ O Blessed Lord ! No danger's Thine—
Thy children stand to watch the Rhine ! ”



SAHARA.

A SONG OF THE STORM.

The dreadful northern frost
Had chilled me through and through;
And so, across the sea,
To Africa I flew.

The waves I lifted high
Upon the Nubian shore,
And o'er the desert plains
My cloudy head I bore.

There old Sahara slept,
And caravans, to pray
Beside the prophet's grave,
Took their uncertain way.

On camels, slow and sure—
A solemn, countless throng—
And dromedaries fleet,
I saw them march along.

Upon a Berber steed,
A noble Sheik I saw;
He led the caravan,
His slightest glance was law.

'Twere well to run a race
With such a noble steed;

To make, for life or death,
A trial of our speed.

Now see me, while on high
My lofty head I shake,
And from the desert's dream
The pilgrims all awake!

On the horizon's verge
An oasis is seen :
There crystal fountains spring
In fields bedecked with green.

“Yonder, behold the port
Your weary feet must gain,
Or nevermore escape
Sahara's burning chain !”

I danced a merry dance,
And made the sand arise,
Until its giddy whirl
Ascended to the skies ;

And covered up with dust
The long procession lay :
The caravan became
The burning desert's prey.

The Sheik escaped—he rode
A steed of royal birth ;

A steed too good to live
Upon this wicked earth.

A racer, such as this,
Would make a worthy pair
With one of those above—
The coursers of the air.

Silent as eagles' flight,
Rush clouds of glowing steam
Through both his nostrils wide,
A never failing stream.

His veins, like molten steel,
Now glow with fever's heat,
And in his raging heart
A thousand pulses beat.

His withers sharp and keen
As warrior's battle-blade;
His hoofs as hard and firm
As adamant are made.

The swelling muscles play
Responsive to his will,
As though they sought to bear
The rider faster still.

Above his graceful head
Now floats the silken mane—

Ah ! I shall never see
A steed like this again !

“ Now, haste thee, gallant gray !
And madly onward fly ! ”
He flew more swiftly than
A comet in the sky.

Then, like a burning star,
His eye-ball brightly glowed ;
And, comet-like, his train
In silver whiteness flowed.

A tiger hurried by
To chase the fleet gazelle,
But with a wave of sand
I hid him where he fell.

Upon his noble steed
The Sheik fled onward fast,
And on the oasis
A refuge found at last.

But still I hurried on
Across the desert fell ;
And bade the horseman brave,
In thunder tones, Farewell !

THE AGED MINSTREL.*

I once was young and fair,
I once was free from care,
Bright roses bloomed upon my cheek,
My ringlets played at hide and seek ;
And I was young and fair,
And I was young and fair.

I once was free and bold ;
I sang for young and old ;
The people praised me when I sung,
They said that I was fair and young ;
For I was free and bold,
For I was free and bold.

I did not spare my breath,
I never thought of death.
Through distant lands I took my way,
And everywhere the world was gay—
Ah ! who could think of death ?
Ah ! who could think of death ?

And still I sing and play,
While creeping on my way ;
I sing, but no one asks me why,
'Mid songs of youth and love, I sigh ;
But still I sing and play,
But still I sing and play.

RECOGNITION.

A pilgrim, from a distant land,
Was coming home, his staff in hand ;

With dusty hair and sunburnt brow—
Ah ! who will know the pilgrim now ?

He saw the porter, his ancient mate,
Leaning against the turnpike gate.

In days gone by, in their cups, the two
Had vowed to be comrades, firm and true ;

But the porter did not know him now,
For the sun had tarnished his youthful brow.

Him the pilgrim hardly stopped to greet,
As he shook the dust from his weary feet.

Then he saw the maid whom he longed to wed :
“ Thou beautiful maiden, I greet thee ! ” he said.

But the maid from her window looked calmly down,
And she knew him not, for his face was brown.

Then he wandered along through the ancient place,
While the tears came trickling down his face.

His mother he met at the chapel door :
“ God greet you ! ” he said, and nothing more.

But, see! his mother weeps for joy,
And falls on the breast of her darling boy.

Her eye alone, in all the town,
Knew the pilgrim well, though his face was brown.



THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE.

In the park the Nightingale

Hung her little head in sadness :

“What avail my notes of gladness ?

Song is but a painful duty :

Plumage gray drives me to madness—

Would I had the rose's beauty !”

In her bed the Rose was grieving :

“How can life afford me pleasure,

Though with gifts in richest measure,

Though with beauty nature blesses,

While the nightingale a treasure

In its melodies possesses ?”

Mirza Schaffy thus decided :

“Cease ye both from speeches stinging !

Nightingale with sweetest singing,

Lovely rose, arrayed in beauty,

Join your charms, together bringing

Two-fold gifts of love and duty.”

“WHEN SPRING ASCENDS THE MOUNTAINS.”

When spring ascends the mountains,
And sunbeams melt the snow ;
When near the bubbling fountains,
The flowers begin to blow ;
When winter's blast
Is hushed at last,
And all the rain and storm is past ;
Then, through the air,
The echoes ring :
“ How bright and fair
Is lovely spring ! ”

When, 'neath the sun's caresses,
The glacier's fountains spring,
Soft grass the meadows dresses,
The woods with music ring ;
When breezes woo
The fields anew,
The skies above are bright and blue.
Then, through the air,
The echoes ring :
“ How bright and fair
Is lovely spring ! ”

'Twas then, thou fairest maiden,
I found the highest bliss ;
Thy lips with sweetness laden,
First felt affection's kiss.
Then in the grove
Were sounds of love ;
The brook sprang from the heights above.
We through the air
Heard echoes ring :
“ How bright and fair
Is lovely spring ! ”



THE EMIGRANTS.

The poem of which the following verses are a translation, is written in the dialect of Westrich, a region lying west of the Hardt mountains, the northern spur of the Vosges. It is addressed to an aged pair who are about to leave their native land for the purpose of seeking a new home in America. Although the author, at the close of the poem, refers to the frequent changes in the political relations of the Rhine Provinces, the poem itself was written in 1854, long before these provinces were severed from France and re-united with the German Empire.

Our life at best has many sorrows,
And sorrow always causes pain ;
But sharpest is the pang of parting
From friends we ne'er shall see again.
I grieve to see you undertaking
Your journey to America ;
What can you mean, you good old people,
To start on such a weary way ?

'Tis all in vain—we can't prevent them—
The team stands ready on the road ;
It bears the choicest of their treasures ;
Ah ! 'tis indeed a heavy load :
The spinning wheel and fire shovel,
And garden hoes, I do not doubt ;
An iron pot and skimming ladle ;
A firkin, too, for *sauer-kraut*.

And in their chest, what sweet mementos
From all their friends, both great and small;
They bear the name of every giver—
How dear and lovely are they all!
With verses full of kindest counsels,
Should troubles come in distant lands;
And, dearer still, their little prayer-books,
A present from their pastor's hands.

Here, too, behold their precious heirloom—
They prize it more than tongue can tell—
How could they live without its music?
The ancient clock—which plays so well
The strains which youthful love and beauty
Pour forth in notes so clear and fine;
And, best of all, the songs of freedom
Our brothers sing along the Rhine.

They have received their pastor's blessing;
They go in distant lands to dwell;
And now from hence in peace departing,
The time has come to bid farewell.
The aged pair, bowed down with sorrow,
Can scarce find strength that word to say,
And yet the cords of deep affection
Still draw them to America.

America ! Their darling Henry,
Their boy, is there, their life and light ;
He sought to raise the flag of freedom,
But had to flee, one gloomy night.
Their boy, before so kind and gentle,
Obedient to their lightest word,
Began to rage, and like a madman,
Threw down the scythe and seized the sword.

Who now will guide the plow at seed-time ?
Who'll hew the wood in forests lone ?
Who'll thresh the grain, and mow the clover ?
Who to the barn will bring them home ?
Who'll mix good fodder for the pony ?
Who for the goats provide so well ?
These were his tasks, with many others—
Ah ! more than any one can tell.

Now he has gone ! By God's protection
Through many pains and trials led,
He's found a home in distant regions,
And earns with ease his daily bread ;
And lately in a pretty letter,
All written by his own dear hand,
Most earnestly he begs his parents,
To come and dwell in freedom's land.

They bid farewell to all their neighbors,
For all the village holds them dear ;
Some weep aloud, and some in silence
Attempt to stay the falling tear.
Dear souls like these deserve affection,
The very children feel their love,
And all are sure the Lord will grant them
The brightest blessings from above.

Now to the fields where long they labored,
They sadly take their weary way :
See, from the blade the ear is springing ;
But who will reap? Ah ! who can say ?
Yet, though a stranger must receive them,
For blessings still to Heaven they call :
“ Thy dews, O Lord ! Thy rain and sunshine,
In Thine own season, grant them all ! ”

In Winter's cold and heats of Summer,
They toiled through many a weary day,
'Twas all in vain—the Lord have mercy !
Our rulers took their all away.
Henry was drafted for a soldier,
But, as he was no longer here,
They seized, lest he might quite escape them,
The hoarded stores of many a year.

Their hearts are full of strange emotions,
They stand, as in a dream, and gaze;
The scene was never half so lovely,
And ne'er so sad in all their days :
“ Adieu, thou field, thou lovely hill-side,
With greenest clover covered o'er ;
Adieu, thou vale, thou sparkling fountain,
We'll never see you—nevermore ! ”

Now see them to the churchyard going,
Where, for his dead, the mourner weeps :
Behold them there, bowed down with sorrow,
Beside the grave where Mary sleeps.
She pined away without complaining,
Her pain and grief she always hid,
But people called her Henry's absence,
The nail that closed her coffin lid.

They kneel at first to pray in silence—
For loud complaints are all in vain—
Then try to speak a word of comfort,
But tears fall down like summer rain.
Ah ! souls that e'er have felt such sorrow,
They know full well when words must cease ;
The aged pair—they move our pity—
In silence leave the “ court of peace ! ”

A moment still the mother lingers,
Plucks up a rose with trembling hand,
And rosemary, a sweet memento,
To bear to yonder distant land.
She plants them in a cup of china—
'Twas Mary's cup, so bright and fair—
Then leaves the grave to Anna Barbie,
Who'll tend it with a sister's care.

Their neighbor's daughter, Anna Barbie—
Their Henry's friend, so kind and true—
But that her father quite forbids it,
Would start upon the journey too.
She feels as though her heart were breaking,
And sadly mourning o'er her fate,
She wipes her eyes upon her apron,
And weeps behind the garden gate.

They have returned. How sad and dreary
The ancient homestead now appears!
The cattle at the barn are lowing,
As though oppressed with grief and fears.
The house-dog and the cat are mourning;
The goat is bleating in the stall;
The pony hangs his head in sorrow—
It seems as though they knew it all.

'Tis time to go—the team is waiting,
Alas! how swift the moments flew;
And many hands, from doors and windows,
Now wave a tender, fond adieu.
Some folks in silence gather round them—
The final hour has come at last—
Dear friends, be firmer now than ever!
I would the parting scene were past!

“Farewell! And here’s my hand, old neighbors!
May blessings on your journey rest!
Leave God to order all the future,
For He alone knows what is best.
And do not yield to grief or sorrow,
Trust in His mercy day by day;
He reigns to-day, He’ll reign to-morrow,
He reigns too in America.

“But when, in distant lands, enjoying
The blessings which your Father sends;
When cares are light, and food is plenty,
Remember us, your early friends!
And when the ancient clock is playing
Its tunes in notes so clear and fine,
Forget not then your faithful brothers!
Forget not Westrich, nor the Rhine!”

They've gone ; but, see ! on yonder hill-top,
How brightly shines the setting sun !
The day puts on a crown of glory
A moment ere his work is done.
Ah ! strange emotions stir my spirit,
While gazing on the fading light :
In distant lands the day is breaking—
With us, alas ! 'tis growing night.

But should the darkness gather round us,
And scatter wide our faithful band :
And if in vain is all our striving,
We too will haste to freedom's land.
All still depends on mighty princes,
And who can tell what they may say ?
But should they e'er declare us Russians,
Then not a single soul will stay.



MOTHER AND CHILD.

The sun has gone down, not a star gives its light ;
But a mother, whose soul is as dark as the night,
Sits alone by a lamp which is flickering low,
And her tears like a river unceasingly flow.

Her darling is dying, her only dear child ;
As pure as an angel, as gentle and mild ;
His cheeks, once like roses, like lilies are pale,
And the voice of the mother is loud in its wail.

“O, dear mother, take me !” the little one cries,
Lifting up its white arms from the bed where it lies ;
With glances so tender it pleads for relief,
While the heart of the mother is bursting with grief.

Now bearing her darling aloft on her arm,
And pressing him close to her bosom so warm ;
Then laying him down on soft pillows again,
For nothing can bring him relief from his pain.

Now kneeling in prayer at the bed where he lies,
“O Lord, help my darling !” in anguish she cries ;
“And—if it must be—O, take him to Thee !
That thy poor little worm may from torture be free.”

She has finished her prayer ; but, full many a night,
She has watched with her child till the morning’s first
light,

And now, weak and worn, she no longer can weep,
But there on her knees she has fallen asleep.

The child, too, is quiet : her trouble is past ;
A vision of bliss God has granted at last ;
And how great her rejoicing no mortal can tell ;
For her trials are ended—her darling is well !

He is fairer than ever, her joy and her pride !
But who is the boy who has come to his side ?
They are playing together in innocent glee—
His guardian angel it surely must be.

His little companion he leads by the hand,
And together they walk through a beautiful land ;
And wherever they wander, wherever they stray,
The angel still leads him the pleasantest way.

A beautiful garden before them they see—
Or, perchance, a green churchyard it also may be ;
There gently and sweetly the soft breezes blow,
And the loveliest flowers abundantly grow.

With his hands full of flowers, yet grasping for more,
The child is more happy than ever before ;
And, see ! the bright blossoms most strangely combine,
And themselves to a beautiful garland entwine.

He looks like an angel of glory, for now
The beautiful garland encircles his brow,

And the heart of the mother is glad at the sight—
As glad as the seraphs in heavenly light.

The sun has gone down, not a star gives its light ;
The angel must go back to heaven to-night ;
And as the last ray fades away in the west,
The angel returns to the land of the blest.

He kisses the child and quiets his fears :
“ Fear not, O my darling ! ere daylight appears
I will take thee to heaven, forever to dwell
Where I never again will bid thee farewell. ”

The mother awakes, and, behold ! 'tis a dream ;
And just then in the east sees the morning's first gleam.
She looks at her child ; but her darling is dead,
While the dawn casts a halo of light round his head.

A smile on his features, as though he could tell
How sweetly the angel had kissed him farewell ;
While a cool morning zephyr in tenderness brings
To the ear of the mother the rustling of wings.

And when the dear child was laid to his rest,
A garland of roses, the fairest and best,
Was placed on his brow, with a bunch in his hand,
Like those he had plucked in the beautiful land.

His mother was sad ; but said, patient and still,
“ ’Tis the Lord ! Let Him do that which pleaseth His
will ! ”

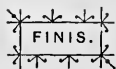
But the Saviour, ere twelve months their courses had
run,
Called her spirit to heaven—her labor was done.



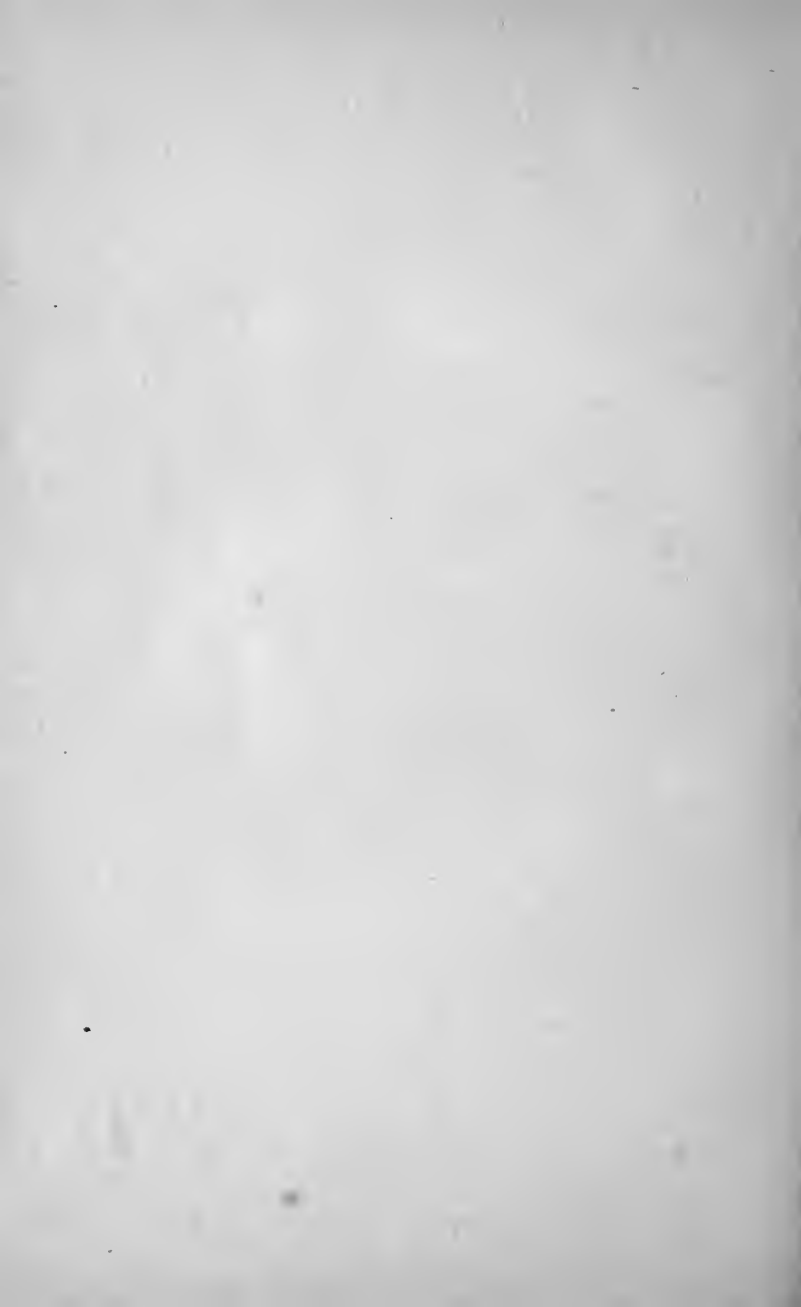
IMMORTELLLES.

Joy and Beauty
Pass away ;
Pain and Duty
Ever stay.

Friendship's greeting,
Virtue true—
Never fleeting,
Ever new.
(140)









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